
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 27 August 2025

by A Knight BA PG Dip MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12th September 2025

Appeal A Ref: APP/C3810/W/25/3366488

Land opposite 54 High Street, Bognor Regis PO21 1SP

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by NWP Street Ltd against the decision of Arun District Council.
 - The application Ref is BR/15/25/PL.
 - The development proposed is installation of 1 no. new communications kiosk with integrated defibrillator and advertising display.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/C3810/H/25/3366489

Land opposite 54 High Street, Bognor Regis PO21 1SP

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by NWP Street Ltd against the decision of Arun District Council.
 - The application Ref is BR/16/25/A.
 - The advertisement proposed is installation of 1 no. new communications kiosk with integrated defibrillator and advertising display.
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Decision

1. Appeal A is dismissed.
2. Appeal B is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

3. The two appeals are made in relation to the same appeal site and to each other. Appeal A relates to the refusal of planning permission for a freestanding communication kiosk (the development). Appeal B relates to the refusal of advertisement consent for a digital display screen (the advertisement) which would be integral to the development. I have determined both appeals on their merits but, to avoid duplication, dealt with the two together below.
4. The description of the proposed development and advertisement in the banner heading above is that used in the application forms. I note that in its decision notices the Council used the descriptions 'Installation of 1 No. new communications kiosk with integrated defibrillator and illuminated advertising display' and 'Installation of 1 No. illuminated advertising display within communications kiosk with integrated defibrillator' respectively.
5. I have also been appointed as the Inspector for other appeals nearby. These are for directly comparable proposals by the same appellant. Whilst, given the proximity of the respective sites and the similarity of the issues involved the

decisions will inevitably appear similar, each proposal has been assessed on its individual merits.

6. In respect of Appeal B, Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) state that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety. The Council has not raised any issues of public safety. Based on the evidence before me, I see no reason to see matters any differently.

Main Issues

7. For Appeal A, the main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.
8. For Appeal B, the main issue is the effect of the advertisement on visual amenity.

Reasons

9. The appeal site is a section of pavement on the northern side of Bognor Regis High Street. An informal boundary of sorts exists part-way along the High Street, near its junction with Bedford Street. This is marked by two tall, multifunctional pieces of highway apparatus.
10. West of this informal boundary, the High Street is characterised by a range of commercial premises on either side of a reasonably busy vehicular thoroughfare. There is little street furniture, and no street trees. The pavement is simple and utilitarian. Cars pass in both directions.
11. East of the boundary, the pavement on the north side of the High Street becomes wider; it is made of individual slabs, giving it a slightly decorative quality. The environment has more in common with the pedestrianised shopping area on London Road, which lies a little further on to the east, than with the approach road to the west, and it is apparent from the arrangement of street furniture that one has entered the commercial centre of the town. A row of street trees lines the roadside near the appeal site; Between these are found a mix of litter bins, public benches, cubic seats, and bike racks. These are set out in a consistent line, giving the area a considered, planned feel.
12. The part of the High Street near the appeal site is architecturally mixed, and includes a range of uses, including shops, food and drink establishments, and professional services. Whilst a varied street scene results, advertising is restricted in the main to that which promotes, and is placed on or directly outside, individual commercial units. This provides a sense of structure and order to the visual composition in the street which, given the range of building styles and advertising displays, is an important, positive element of its character.
13. The street furniture is varied in appearance but unfussy. Save for the trees, most of it is not very tall. This creates an open feel to the pavement around the appeal site, in which the furniture does little to compete with the advertising displays on the shopfronts around it; Instead, the furniture contributes to a modest, informal public space from which commercial displays are largely absent.
14. The development would be a freestanding kiosk some 2.4m tall, 1.1m wide, and 0.8m deep with an LCD display screen on the outside. A static advertising image

would change every 10 seconds. The development would be oriented at a right angle to the main stretch of the street and so be visually prominent when approached from the east or west, and from along the street.

15. The design of the development reflects traditional public phone boxes and would be recognisable as such. In that respect, it would not be an unusual or incongruous addition to the street; indeed, there are older-style phone boxes further along the street to the east. Notwithstanding this, the development would add a new structure, noticeably taller and broader than any that exist at present. The development would erode the open feel of the section of pavement in question and be at odds with the simple character of the public space. This would be exacerbated by the introduction of general advertising, something which would appear incongruous in the immediate surroundings. Overall, the development and the advertisement would harmfully undermine the considered, planned feel described above.
16. It is intended that a street tree would be planted as part of the development. Whilst I appreciate that the details of this would be agreed separately, I have little reason to believe that the tree would be in the area around the appeal site. As such, it would do little to offset the harm to the character and appearance of the area described above.
17. The development would provide services, including 4G coverage, and free phone calls to emergency services. I do not doubt that it would be well-maintained. These are public benefits that would contribute towards advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure, which the Framework states is essential for economic growth and social well-being. I recognise that in locations where mobile network coverage is poor, or for people who do not possess a mobile phone, a public call box may be the only option for making vital calls.
18. I have little evidence, however, that the centre of Bognor Regis has poor coverage. Indeed, the appellant has not contested the Council's assertion that local coverage is reliable. I also have little before me to demonstrate that levels of mobile phone ownership are low in Bognor Regis, resulting in demand for public telephony facilities.
19. It would be possible to display public messages on the screen, including from the Council. Local businesses could benefit from a planned discounted rate for advertising. The development would display useful information including local maps and points of interest and would provide emergency numbers. It would also house a defibrillator, a facility with the potential to make a significant difference to the survival chances of a person suffering cardiac arrest.
20. Whilst I acknowledge the benefits listed above, the weight afforded to them is tempered by the absence of evidence to show unmet local need for any of the services that would be supplied, or to show that similar facilities could not be provided without the proposed development. I am particularly mindful that there is a phone box nearby along the street, and the area appears well-served by a network of defibrillators. Overall, the benefits would not outweigh the harms.

21. I have been provided with excerpts from previous decisions in Hillingdon¹ and Middlesbrough², in which comparable kiosks were found acceptable. The first case evidently involved the replacement of an existing phone box described by the Inspector as a tired looking feature. That is not true of the scheme before me. I also have little evidence to show me that the setting in the second case is comparable to that on Bognor Regis High Street, and so attach little weight to the cited previous decisions.
22. Regarding Appeal A, I find that the development would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would be contrary to Policy D DM1 of the Arun Local Plan 2011-2031 (2018) where it requires that development reflect or improve local character and enhance streets and public spaces so that they are attractive.
23. Regarding Appeal B, for the reasons given I find that the advertisement would cause harm to the visual amenity of the area, contrary to the provisions of paragraph 141 of the Framework which states, amongst other things, that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited.

Conclusion

24. For the reasons set out above, the proposals under Appeal A and Appeal B would harm the character and appearance and visual amenity of the area. Having considered all matters raised, I conclude that Appeals A and B are dismissed.

A Knight

INSPECTOR

¹ Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/Z/16/3157043.

² Application Ref: Ref: 22/0734/FUL.

Appendix 1

List of those who have appealed

Reference	Case Reference	Appellant
Appeal A	APP/C3810/W/25/3366488	NWP Street Limited
Appeal B	APP/C3810/H/25/3366489	NWP Street Limited